5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

by a similar mass, whence two strings only continue for 40 odd centimetres. 532
The whole length of the band, therefore, amounts to approximately 50 centimetres. Its object is, no doubt, to fasten the mask in position over the face during corroboree ceremonies.

Domestic Utensils.

Food carriers.—The most common form of "mika" or carrier for food and 322
other articles is one made of a single piece of bark of the "stringy bark" eucalypt 415
(*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 3, 4, 5, and 6). An oblong piece of such bark, say 1 metre long by 40 centimetres broad, is freshly cut and folded transversely at its centre. The edges on either side are pared down, then laid flat, one over the other, and sewn or laced together with plain "run-on" stitches, 2 centimetres apart. A row of slanting and overlapping stitches often skirts the open edge at a short distance down; occasionally, too, part of the edge is cross-hemstitched and plastered with beeswax. The object of this procedure is to prevent the bark from tearing by virtue of its fibrous structure. The open mouth of the carrier is nearly circular or oval; in the latter case the long axis of the oval runs at right angles to the base-edge of the implement. These carriers are of various sizes; the largest that came under observation measured 63 centimetres in height and 43 in width at the base. Ordinarily they are unpainted, but on special occasions elaborate designs, consisting 415
of circles, oblong and other figures, with cross-hatched shading, are drawn on the 531
outer surface in red, yellow, white, and black. The designs are best studied by reference to the reproductions (*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 5 and 6). Occasionally tassel-shaped appendages are noticed at one of the convex outer surfaces of the mouth of the carrier. These consist of a flattish, egg-shaped mass of beeswax (studded on the surface with the red beans of *Abrus praecatorius*), which is suspended by two twisted fur strings (*vide* Plate VIII, Fig. 6).

Water carriers.—Water is taken to camp from a soakage or spring in simple [312]
structures made out of the bark of the paper-bark tree (*Melaleuca sp.*). An oblong 322
piece of this bark is bent upon itself longitudinally, both its ends folded several 415
times and kept together by binding with cane or by spiking with short pointed wooden pegs (*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 1 and 2).

Drinking vessels.—Several natural objects are used for drinking vessels. 415
Among the most common are the discarded tests of mollusca. The species *Melo-* [237]
diadema and *Fusus pricei* were found in use at several native wells (*vide* Plate XIV, Figs. 1 and 2).

But when no such shells are available a piece of bark is torn or cut from a 322
tree (usually from a *Melaleuca*) and folded so as to form a water-tight cup (*vide* 415
Plate XIV, Figs. 3 and 4). This piece of bark, which measures about 30 centimetres by 20, is folded longitudinally at about its middle (*vide* Fig. 3, D). Both ends are then bent upon themselves at right angles to this plane and at about one quarter the whole length from either end. The overturned ends and the inner

123 clutched Tchuwiunga more tightly
501 and I hugged my KLM bag while the two men worked to head the canoe into the largest waves while trying at the same time to head in
[137] towards the shore. This meant taking a good many not so large waves broadside and we got very wet. Facing sternwards, I could not see the waves, so if a particularly
[823] large one (Agnes called them "female waves!") approached, I would be given a few seconds warning and would duck the breaking spray which would cover the boat and its occupants. The only miserable one was the puppy who presented a very puzzled and hurt expression as he peered out from under the folds of Agnes's *naga*. For the rest of us the cold spray was a welcome relief from the burning sun.

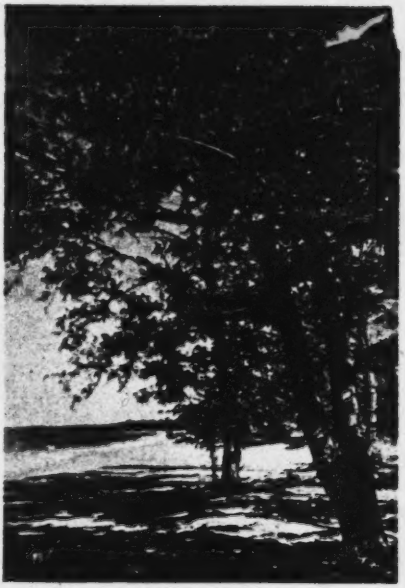

Fig. 4. A casuarina grove

Once in close to the shore, our skilful paddlers brought the canoe safely onto the beach, riding in on one of the breakers. We unloaded everything, although we intended to stop only for lunch, for the canoe would soon be swamped by the sea if left alone. After unloading, Albert swam the canoe out beyond the breakers where he anchored it with a large rock.

123 Then we climbed the low dunes close to the shore and came to a grove of casuarinas. These provided much appreciated shade but a very uncomfortable carpet of spiny seed pods. Taking up our two billy cans, Agnes led me to the back of the grove where she
[312] showed me a small well. There were many footprints around the sandy hole which were identified as belonging to Black Joe's mob, the natives who had preceded us. They had, however, not depleted the well for in the bottom was a small puddle, and since this was at the very end of the six months dry season, it was considered fortunate that there was any water at all. Agnes carefully tasted